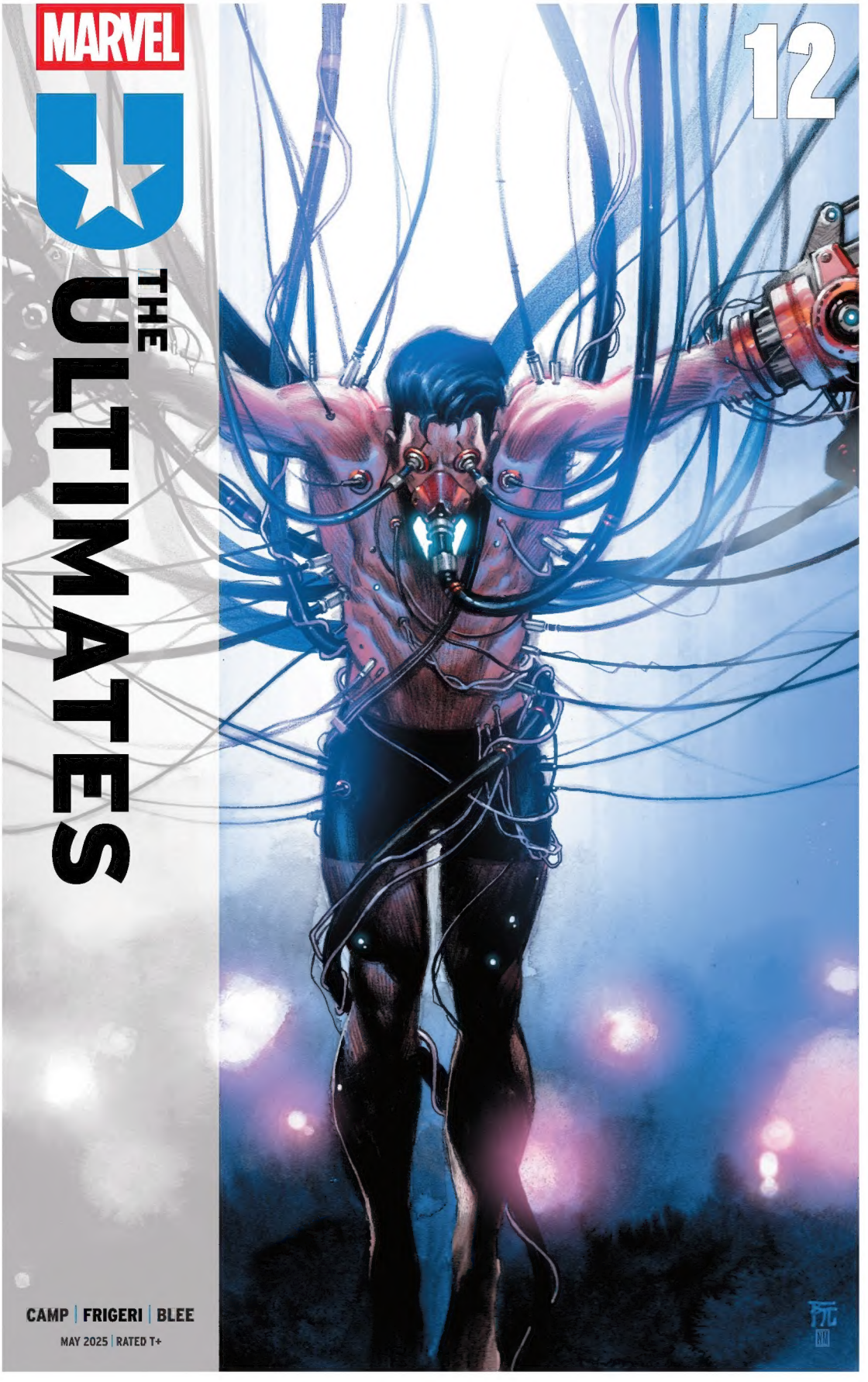

MARVEL
THE ULTIMATES
12
CAMP | FRIGERI | BLEE
MAY 2025 | RATED T+

It's dangerous for me. Talking to you.
You have nothing to worry about. You're protected. Sheltered in the palm of H.A.N.D.
Now... what have you got for me?
Tony... Iron Lad called a meeting.
Director FURY
The entire network? On the satellite?
No. Half of us were there remotely. After what happened in Heaven, they never assemble the entire network all at once.
They've learned.
All right, start from the beginning. What happened at this meeting?

This is what happened.

Tony, what...?
That's my nightmare. How did you get footage of--
Our nightmare, Janet. Remember? We are all--
...meaning to see someone about them, but then I think, "Well, Hank, nobody specializes in terrorist post-traumatic stress or nightmares of Hulks rampaging through Heaven..."
Not just a nightmare.
Tell them, Doom.
Tell them or I will.

Fine.
Tony, what's going on--?
Since I fused the Immortus Engine with my nervous system--
--freezing myself forever in the decisecond before death--
--I've been catching up on what I missed.
The engine allows me to... see through time.
Well, sometimes. I'm still figuring things out.

When I looked back on that day...the day I...
RRRRCRUUNNNCHHHHH
I saw...*two* versions of events, ***superimposed.*** Like two competing signals, one growing ***stronger*** as the other ***faded out.***
One in which Doom got us out *just in time...*
...and one in which he ***didn't.***

Sigh It was all very... *messy.*
By the time I found you... what I found was *unacceptable.*
So I *intervened.*
That *was* what happened. But it didn't *have* to be.
And it isn't what happened *anymore.*
I saved your lives. You are *welcome.*

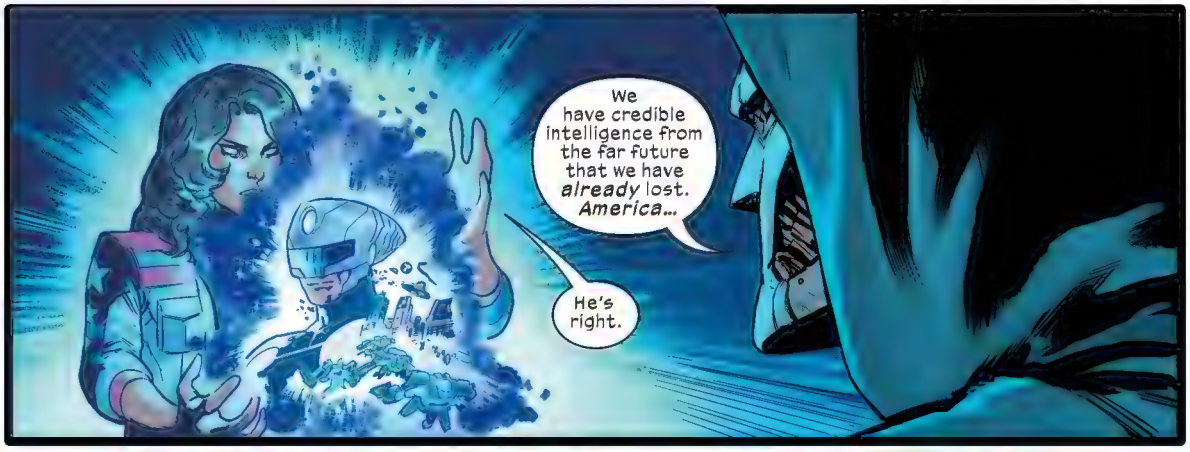
"Welcome"...?
Wait...you're saying th-that really happened? I thought I was all screwed up in the head, man!
We...we died?
That's [redacted] up.
I knew you died, Tony... I knew...
You've been lying to us, Doom. You've been lying to us all. And you broke our agreement--
I saved your lives! I saved the Ultimates! Our agreement? You should be kissing my feet!
Everything I have done, I have done for the cause!
And what about Project 4?

"All that time, supposedly working out 'the correct dose of cosmic energy.' All a *lie*.
"Those poor dead mice."
All that time you've been trying to break through the Maker's barrier. To radically change the past! All behind our backs!
If you want an explanation, I will give it *happily*. But if you seek *contrition*, I am afraid the capacity was long ago cut out of me.
I...am *Doom*. You must accept this, and all it means. As I have.
You're *irresponsible*! You could have destroyed *everything*! You know what happened to the Guardians--you could erase this world!
And what in this world is so worth *saving*?! *Tell me!*

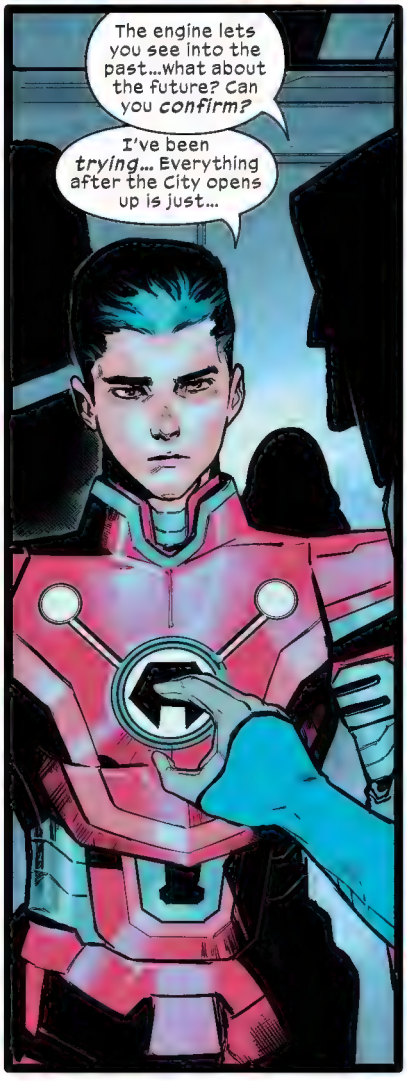
"Fix the world." Those were your words. That is the supposed purpose of the Ultimates. Well, I am trying!
Can you say the same? Can any of you say the same?!
Hold on, rewriting reality? Killing ourselves? Isn't that a little... extreme?
This is not what I agreed to--
I admire the ambition, but did you even have a plan for once you broke through?
Yeah, like how's you getting your family back gonna help the rest of--?
Just tell me: Is that why you took us out after I was--
--after he--?
RUUNNNCH
Were you trying to cover your tracks?

...
Is that really what you think of me?
I don't know what to think. It just seems a bit... *convenient,* doesn't it? I'm the only other one who could have understood what you've been doing.
Why else...why would you let that *happen* to me?
I *tried,* Tony.
It wasn't just separate space/times. I had to save *you* without uncreating *myself.* Or this *version* of myself.
The further away your deaths were from me, the more difficult that became. The more enmeshed your *deaths* became with my *life.*
With every passing second, the calculations became 10^{23} times more complex...
I *tried.* I tried to get you out before... from the beginning...
...I tried to save you...

But even with a *time machine,* I ran out of time.
Everything I touch...all doomed...
I miscalculated. Again.
It won't work without you. None of it works without *all* of us.
Okay...
I had to save you. Even if it meant risking...
Doom... it's okay.
It is not "okay," Anthony.
Nothing is okay.
Don't you see it's *not working?* We haven't made enough progress. Not *close.*
We're running out of time!

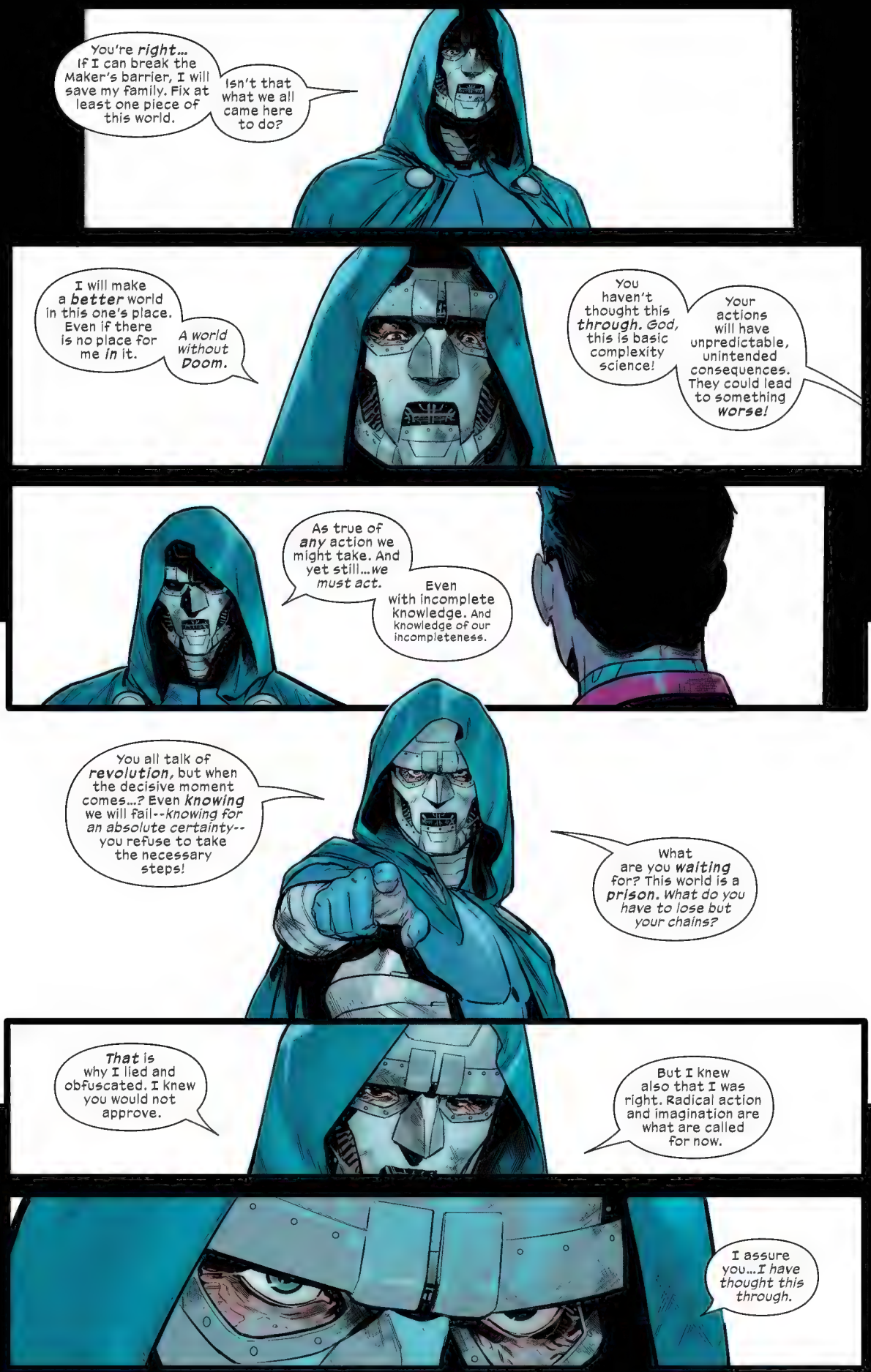

We have credible intelligence from the far future that we have *already* lost. *America*...
He's right.

I've seen it myself--and I'm *sure* it was real.
Don't ask me how. I'm...just sure.


The engine lets you see into the past...what about the future? Can you *confirm?*
I've been *trying*... Everything after the City opens up is just...

...white.

That's...
...ominous...


You're right... If I can break the Maker's barrier, I will save my family. Fix at least one piece of this world.
Isn't that what we all came here to do?
I will make a better world in this one's place. Even if there is no place for me in it.
A world without Doom.
You haven't thought this through. God, this is basic complexity science!
Your actions will have unpredictable, unintended consequences. They could lead to something worse!
As true of any action we might take. And yet still...we must act.
Even with incomplete knowledge. And knowledge of our incompleteness.
You all talk of revolution, but when the decisive moment comes...? Even knowing we will fail--knowing for an absolute certainty--you refuse to take the necessary steps!
What are you waiting for? This world is a prison. What do you have to lose but your chains?
That is why I lied and obfuscated. I knew you would not approve.
But I knew also that I was right. Radical action and imagination are what are called for now.
I assure you...I have thought this through.

Okay.
..."Okay"?
Okay. I believe you. And I trust you.
You... do?
I didn't call everyone here to put you on trial. I just thought we needed to get everything out into the open. So we could decide on the future of this thing.
Together.
Cap? What do you think about all this?

Doom's right.
Huh!
Really?
I was not expecting that.
I...
I agree with you. This isn't working.
I expected a pointless *fight.*
But I don't think trying to break through the barrier is any better.
If you haven't cracked it by now, there's no guarantee you'll crack it in the next six months. And six months is what we've got.
That's before getting into the ethics of killing trillions...
And Tony, the "origin boxes" are ***also*** a failed concept. I stand by that.
But what we're doing now isn't working ***either.*** We don't need ominous visions of the future, or potential pasts, to see what's in front of our ***faces.***
We are no match for what's already here, much less what's coming when the City opens.

The Ultimates have been scattered, fractured and disoriented. And I blame myself.
I've been thinking small. Like a *soldier*, instead of a...
...instead of what we *need*.
The truth is, *America Chavez* and *Mr. Cage* have been much more effective than I have. We could all learn a lot from them.
Oh, uh...
I could recommend some *reading materials*...
We need more active outreach. We need to expand the network. *Rapidly.*
We need to give them something to *fight* for.
What do *you* give them?
Something to *die* for, if need be.

But I don't want something to die for...
And we must use the Immortus Engine to its full potential. It is our greatest weapon.
"We'll have to think in four dimensions if we want to save the world," huh?
Four at least.
Well, the truth is, I've already started thinking about possibilities--
You're already making the same mistakes! It can't just be you or Doom or Steve making decisions this time.
For this to work, we'll need everyone's ideas. We have to try everything to save everything.
One of you will be responsible for untold suffering and the death of trillions...
...and the other could save everything.
I... America is right. We...we can't trust ourselves.
I mean, we can't entrust the future to any three of us.

So from here on out, we pool perspectives and ideas. Find ways to combine expertise and enhance our approaches.
Nothing is *forbidden.* Everything is *possible.*
"We're going to fix the world."
ULTIMATES V.2.0
Top down didn't work. Let's try *bottom up.*
ULTIMATES V.2.0
Okay...then I guess it's *unanimous.* The Ultimates 2.0 is hereby *dissolved.*
ULTIMATES V.3.0
Let's make sure the next one's better.
So...who wants to go *first?*
"All dead, *huh?* Shame it didn't *stick.*"

Present company excluded, of course.
Listen, Fury, you made assurances--
Then rest assured. I'm a man of my word.
When the time comes--and the time will come--
--you and your husband will be spared, Mrs. Van Dyne.
So long as you tell us everything, you have my personal guarantee.
Now you better get back, before Hank misses you. We've put groceries in your car, for your alibi.
Try the feta dip. I hear it's good.
And hey... thank you for participating in H.A.N.D.'s informant program.
We'll be in touch.
SIX MONTHS REMAINING...

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